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FROM PEARL HARBOR TO KOREA

by William Henry Chamberlin

The calendar sometimes inflicts strange ironies. December 7, 1941, was the date of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. This was not a bolt from the blue or an act of mental aberration. It was the result of a long diplomatic deadlock, during which the United States had been inflexible and uncompromising in its demand that Japan withdraw completely from China.

A virtual commercial blockade of Japan had been enforced since the end of July. The proposal of the moderate Japanese Prime Minister, Prince Konoye, to come to the United States and seek a basis of accommodation in personal talks with Roosevelt had been brushed aside. A proposal for a temporary modus vivendi which Hull had considered during the last days of November was never presented to the Japanese.

There are two highly impressive witnesses for the proposition that the Pacific War, of which the first shots were fired at Pearl Harbor, was a conflict over China. Roosevelt, at a dinner of the Foreign Policy Association in 1944, said:

> "We could have compromised with Japan and bargained for a place in a Japanese-dominated Asia by selling out the hearts' blood of the Chinese people. And we rejected that!"

His bellicose Secretary of War, the late Henry L. Stimson, confirmed this Roosevelt statement. In his diary for November 25 Stimson reported on an important council held by Roosevelt, composed of Hull, Knox, Marshall, Stark and himself, at which "the question was how we should maneuver them (the Japanese) into firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves". In his book of memoirs, On Active Service, Stimson flatly asserts:

"If at any time the United States had been willing to concede to Japan a free hand in China there would have been no war in the Pacific."

So the propaganda pattern which was sold to the American people before and after Pearl Harbor presented a highly melodramatic picture of an incredibly wicked Japan and a virtuous, wronged China. America was to be the white knight, the Sir Galahad, who would rescue China from the molestations of Japan. Utterly blot out Japan -- so ran the argument at that time, and peace and stability would reign forever in the Orient, and American missionary effort and trade in China would flourish like the green bay tree.

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The final coffin nail had surely been driven into this compound of happy illusions on December 7, 1950. For this tragic and ironical anniversary found the greater part of the American combat army trying desperately, in sheer self-defense to shed the "hearts' blood" of some hundreds of thousands of the "Chinese people" who had poured in to attack them in Korea.

At the time when the Chinese Reds were launching their Pearl Harbor against the United States and against the United Nations, the Chinese Communist delegate to the United Nations, Wu Hsiu-chuan, was delivering a tirade against this country in the Security Council of the United Nations which exceeded in violence the language used in Japan's declaration of war nine years earlier. One need only cite such phrases as the following:

> "I am here to accuse the United States Government of the unlawful and criminal act of armed aggression against the territory of China, Formosa . . .
>
> "All these acts of direct aggression against China by the United States aggression forces in Korea are an insolent provocation which the Chinese people absolutely cannot tolerate."

II

The wheel has come full circle. Nine years after the Pearl Harbor attack we are paying a terrific price in the lives of our fighting men and in a sense of national humiliation and confusion for the long succession of blunders committed in the Far East by the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations.

Among the more obvious of the blunders were: (1) fighting a war with no more intelligent aim than the destruction of Japan, (2) giving Stalin a strategic and economic stranglehold on China at Yalta, (3) writing off our Nationalist friends and encouraging our enemies in China (despite the doleful results of pursuing the same policy in Eastern Europe), and (4) forcing General MacArthur to fight a war in Korea figuratively with one hand tied behind his back.

Anyone who believes that it is possible to charm or appease the Chinese Communists into being friends of the West should have been finally undeceived by the contents and tone of Wu Hsiu-chuan's speech. Hatred of the West, arrogant truculent assurance of a world-conquering mission dripped from every period. Wu's reference to solidarity with "the peoples" of Japan, Vietnam (Indo-China) and the Philippines showed that Chinese Communist ambitions, like Soviet Communist ambitions, are insatiable and unlimited.

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In the light of this speech, and of the accompanying forward surge of the Red Chinese hordes in Korea one may recognize that there was far more truth than American public opinion ever recognized in the Japanese claim to be resisting Chinese Communism and Soviet imperialism. A Japanese army on the Amur, holding the line against the Soviet Union, Japanese strong points on the mainland, serving as a barrier against Chinese Communism would look pretty good, from the standpoint of American national security, today.

But the consequence of Mr. Roosevelt's crusading war in the Far East was to destroy the valuable potential element of check and balance which Japan represented as against Russia and China. And there is a wise old Greek saying to the effect that one thing even the gods cannot achieve is to make the past as if it had never been.

III

The alternatives which the Chinese Pearl Harbor places before the United States are extremely difficult. There is the possibility of surrender to the blackmail represented by the injection into the Korean war of hundreds of thousands of Chinese trained troops, humorously described as "volunteers". Mr. Wu has stated his terms for unconditional surrender with brutal frankness: withdrawal from Korea, surrender of Formosa, admission of Communist China to the UN.

Acceptance of these terms would mean the dissolution of Chiang Kai-shek's army in Formosa and the probable collapse of guerrilla resistance in China itself. Yet it is remarkable how many individuals who professed to be shocked to the depths of their moral sensibilities by suggestions that Hitler and Stalin should have been permitted to fight it out or that the United States would be well advised to go slowly with all-out support for China in 1941 are apparently ready to run up the white flag of surrender to Mao Tse-tung.

The Chinese Communists are openly making war on the United Nations. Yet the Secretary-General of the United Nations entertains the Chinese Communist delegates and does his best, without much visible success, to appease them. The Chinese Communists are trying to cut to pieces British troops in Korea. Yet the British Government does not react even to the point of breaking off diplomatic relations.

American troops are fighting a desperately uneven defensive struggle in Korea. But they are compelled to fight with the immense handicap of not being allowed to bomb enemy supply lines in Manchuria. After Pearl Harbor in 1941 there was no international forum in New York where

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Japanese and other Axis representatives could blackguard the United States as much as they wished. But there have been no restrictions on the activities of Mr. Wu and Mr. Vishinsky. How long the American people will put up with a situation which combines the worst features of both war and appeasement remains to be seen.

IV

This amazing effort to act as if Red China were not making large-scale war on the Western World is accompanied by the argument that Europe claims priority over Asia in defense plans and that we have neither the means nor the desire to commit mass armies to the Chinese mainland. But this overlooks the possibility of resisting Chinese Communist aggression by methods which would not bleed Western manpower white nor impose a heavy burden on the American economy.

This is true even if complete evacuation of Korea should become necessary. China can be blockaded. Its centers of military concentration, industry and communication can be shattered by air attack. Chiang Kai-shek can be encouraged and aided in using Formosa as a base for raids and descents on the China coast. Anti-Communist guerrillas can be helped. Japan can be rearmed. If Chinese "volunteers" can appear in Korea, why not Japanese?

It is obvious that the flood tide of aggressive Asiatic Communism can be stemmed only by Asiatics. Our repeated failures to give a fighting chance to our potential friends in Asia, to the South Koreans before last June, to the Japanese, to the Chinese Nationalists, is calculated to raise the old question: Stupidity or treason?

Probably there is nothing in prospect in Asia but defeat, disaster and disgrace until the State Department is put in charge of someone with wit enough to realize that a regime which throws a million men in battle array against you is really waging war, and firmness enough to make a clean sweep of "experts" of the Owen Lattimore type of thinking.

American and UN prestige could survive a forced military withdrawal from Korea. They could not survive the futile humiliation of surrender to military aggression, of appeasement of Stalin's Chinese Gauleiters, of what might amount to a super-Munich. Will to resist Communist aggression in Europe or anywhere else would rapidly evaporate under the influence of such a surrender.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VII, No. 50

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By Frank C. Hanighen December 13, 1950

TRUMAN LETTER: The President's epistolary attack on the music critic has set the town agog. Apart from universal reprobation, there is an undercurrent of alarm in a capital which watched the physical decline of FDR in 1944-45. We have heard from one doctor of neurology that the President's prose contained some rather disturbing symptoms. There was, indeed, a sort of lunar savagery in one part of those portions of the letter which were considered printable; and it surpassed any condition indulgently explained as a "wee drop too much". Therefore some wonder if the enormous strain of events may cause Mr. Truman to "crack up".

The Chicago Tribune, in a thoughtful editorial on December 12, remarks that the letter placed "the American people on notice that the President's mental competence and emotional stability are in question". Recalling that Wilson was "not himself" in the last months of his Presidency, nor was Roosevelt himself even before Yalta, the Tribune said in conclusion: "In each case the President's entourage protected him rather than the country with results which are too well known to require comment. That history must not be repeated."

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TRUMAN-ATTLEE: The upshot of the conference of the President and British Prime Minister was a bland communique, which laid itself open to the charge of "appeasement". There was no decision to take any strong measures against the aggressor Communist regime in China -- such as a blockade, or backing for Chiang Kai-shek. Furthermore diplomatic observers noted that it reminded the Chinese Communists of the Cairo Declaration (1943) which promised the restoration of Formosa to China. This reminder may have been intended to lay the groundwork for a deal with the Communist Government. Some observers believe that the conference provided Acheson with an opportunity to strengthen his long-term plan for appeasing Communist China. (Is it true, as some say, that the meeting was really called by Acheson who privately sent word to Attlee to make the trip?) The scheme, it is said, is to let the UN make all big decisions (such as withdrawing from Korea) and then have the U.S. refuse to veto on some technical ground.

The abiding fear which shaped U.S. policy during the conversations was that outright appeasement might further provoke the American people. The mail from the country to the White House is said to be large and highly emotional. In view of this climate of public opinion (and of the scheme for "passing the buck" to the UN), it is no wonder that officials are anxiously asking of news observers the following question: "Would public opinion go so far as to demand U.S. withdrawal from the United Nations?"

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MAIL FROM HOME: American fathers and mothers, and citizens in general, are aroused to an unprecedented pitch over the crushing episode in Korea and the handling of our foreign affairs, if the avalanche of letters and telegrams from people at home pouring in on Senate and House members constitute any indication. This flood of mail is not an organized campaign; every letter is distinctive and individualistic, often from persons well known to the recipients. The volume has reached the highest point since the days just after Pearl Harbor. Stinging criticism and outraged feelings stand out in about 97 per cent of the missives. Of 96 such letters on the desk of a New England Senator last Monday morning, 93 urged all or some of these things: ouster of Acheson; use of the atomic bomb or any other means to save entrapped Americans in Korea; and full re-examination of foreign policy. Perusal of 172 letters

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to a Mississippi Senator found 160 of them strongly asking the same things. Senator Taft's mail is the heaviest in over two years, and preponderantly asking Acheson's ouster, and decisive action in Korea. And there are a number of demands for the impeachment of the President.

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SPEED-UP IN MOBILIZATION: Swift mobilization of economic and military resources, with intensified rearmament effort, is now the declared objective of Mr. Truman and his high officials. This has the appearance of a reversal of weeks of inaction, indecision and uncertainty. Some of the sharper economic controls granted by Congress last summer are about to be invoked, Mr. Truman indicates, with larger armed forces, and expansion in facilities for production of war materials. A proclamation of "limited" national emergency to attain these ends lay on Mr. Truman's desk this week, ready for his signature at any minute, but details not given out in advance. The sudden change to a speed-up, after long looking at April 1 as a date for "swift" mobilization, came in response to rapidly growing pressures in Congress, where the big mail from home has given voice to demands for instant acceleration in the whole rearmament effort, and an end to administrative vacillation.

If Mr. Truman carries through as he now indicates, here is what is in sight: Price and wage controls are coming fast, and together; union leaders will have failed in the effort to stall off both in the hope of finally getting only price control. Manpower shortages will mount now, due to the armed services calling in more young men, and reservists. Material shortages will begin to spread as defense orders claim more basic materials; the Government will decide what defense gets and what is left for civilians. Salary controls may come quickly with wage controls; but either way, there is another tax rise in sight very soon after the new Congress assembles. Inflation will not easily be brought under control; it will expand some more, and lead to higher appropriations in the new Congress for defense costs. Labor will resist giving a "no strike" pledge, which may lead to the present Wage Stabilization Board being quickly changed into a War Labor Board, probably with Cyrus Ching at the head of it. There will be a big deficit in Government spending, especially in the new fiscal year, when officials now estimate the outgo at $67 billion. Only about half of the spending will be covered by current taxes, even with increases in levies and brackets. Ultimate ceiling of the men in the armed forces will probably be 5 million, but this is not certain.

To many, "emergency" looks like merely a word which the Administration grasps in its desperation -- since the White House has already long possessed extraordinary powers to act. Be that as it may. If it does act, the repercussions of mobilization, as outlined in the preceding paragraph, will not be far behind.

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MACARTHUR: Amid the continuing pother about General MacArthur's failure to foresee the massive invasion of North Korea by the Chinese Communists, we learn of an explosive fact. This fact, if ever produced before an open hearing, would destroy the talk of Marshall's "reckless tactics".

From a source, peculiarly in a position to know, we hear that the Far Eastern Commander, before his final thrust toward the Yalu river, read an intelligence report from Washington. The report discounted chances of the Chinese Communists intervening in serious force. This report came from the office of General Walter Bedell Smith, Chief of the Central Intelligence Agency, and represented the considered view of that body's experts.

Now the Central Intelligence Agency is the overall Agency for gathering intelligence and evaluating it from all angles -- including the political. Hence, it took account of the various political maneuvers in the UN, the atmosphere of the

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moves in the diplomatic chess game -- and thereby gave MacArthur the decisive information he sought. For the Far Eastern Commander necessarily had to consider the state of negotiations as one factor affecting the picture along the Yalu. With such an opinion from Washington, and the UN mandate to recapture all Korean territory, it would have been surprising if MacArthur, or any other commander, had hesitated.

As for his own Intelligence arm, observers from Korea have pointed out to us how very nearly impossible it would have been for General Willoughby's men to obtain the necessary information in view of the terrain and weather. "The only intelligence", remarked a two-star general to us the other night, "necessary to warn us of the danger of a Chinese Communist invasion was available from the very first day our troops landed in Korea: the plain fact that the Reds were in force in Manchuria."

In this connection, we must draw attention to a dispatch to the Manchester Guardian from their American correspondent, Alistair Cooke, reprinted in the Baltimore Sun (December 8), in which Cooke reports that "Washington is coming to accept the humiliating fact that General MacArthur has been defeated rather than discredited". The British correspondent, not noted for any partiality in MacArthur's favor, sought to debunk his own countrymen's effort to attribute "our present grief to a presumption on the General's part that his military and political authority coincide". After a long review of UN and MacArthur policy, Cooke comes to the conclusion, "his Washington critics are beginning to admit it is hard to see that he did more than take a gamble the UN backed -- and lost". But Cooke is in error about the "critics" attitude. Since his piece appeared, some columnists have been at it again -- with all the malice they can summon.

CHRISTMAS GIFT OFFER

TIME IS GETTING SHORT: Have you remembered all those you wish to remember this Christmastime? We believe a gift of HUMAN EVENTS is particularly appropriate to men of good will. Surely a weekly reminder of the principles for which we stand is indicative of your thoughtfulness. If the Christmas gift offers which we have included with copies of HUMAN EVENTS the past few weeks have been "lost in the shuffle", may we take this bit of space to bring them to your attention?

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MARSHALL AND KOREA: From a well-informed source, we have received some interesting hitherto unpublished information about the original, ill-fated decision to land troops on the Korean peninsula last June. There has always been a good deal of mystery about how the President reached the decision to send ground troops and engage in land warfare. Last summer, this column gathered various bits of evidence and hearsay which suggested that the military chiefs were either opposed or reluctant. (It is now known that they were inclined to adhere to a secret plan which limited retaliation to air bombing and naval blockade.) Generally, it has been believed that the responsibility for the landing was solely that of Truman and Acheson.

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Now comes word suggesting that there was a third partner in the decision. We hear from a usually well-informed source that President Truman paid a secret visit to General George C. Marshall some time in the 24 hours preceding the afternoon of June 26. According to this information, the President motored to the General's home at Leesburg, Virginia, about 35 miles from Washington -- although it is not explained why, instead, the General did not come to the White House. The President was reportedly absent from the Capital for about four hours. As such a motor journey should have consumed about an hour-and-a-half (down and back), there was ample time for a considerable review of the Korean situation. While our source gives no details about what was said at the meeting, we are justified in concluding that General Marshall urged or approved the plan for landing U.S. troops in Korea. It would, indeed, be surprising if Marshall's assent was not given, for it is well known that the President has long esteemed Marshall's military counsel. Finally, it was after this secret meeting that the President made the decision of June 26 to undertake the ill-starred Korean landing.

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SENATOR THOMAS: Mr. Truman is contemplating a switch to take care of Senator Elbert Thomas (D., Utah), defeated for re-election. Thus, he would be made Secretary of Labor, according to intent now, and Secretary Tobin would be transferred to the Chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee. Chairman Boyle is retiring because of ill health. Thomas is now Chairman of the Senate Labor Committee, and the move, if made, would indicate that Mr. Truman will continue to court the unions as a political sheet anchor. Thomas was the father of the voluntary "no strike" pledge given by unions early in World War II, and he frustrated Senate passage of the "no strike prohibition" bill brought up when strikes impeded war production. However, Thomas is reported shy. It is said that UN Delegate Austin has offered Thomas the post of Governor of UN-mandated islands in the Pacific. An atoll may seem the more peaceful spot to a weary lame-duck Senator.

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LABOR COMMITTEE FIGHT: Membership vacancies in the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare in the new Congress have become engulfed this week in a grim battle for retention of control by Labor interests of this most effective bottleneck on "labor" legislation in the new session.

The Committee will have three vacancies on the majority side, and one on the minority side, due to the retirement of Senators Thomas, Pepper and Withers, Democrats, and Donnell, Republican. These changes, under committee seniority, give the presiding role to Montana's "liberal" Senator Jim Murray, long a defender of "Left causes". In the 81st Congress the Committee has consisted of 8 Democrats and 5 Republicans, but the Republicans demand now that their number shall be increased to 7. It is on this issue that the battle will be fought out on the Senate floor.

Industrial management has a tremendous stake in the outcome of the contest. Murray has lately been Chairman of the Committee's sub-Committee on Labor-Management Relations, engaged in provocative and controversial studies of management policies and relations with employees. The sub-Committee's staff was recruited from among former union organizers and well defined "liberals" in government. A series of prospective sub-Committee reports, highly critical and condemnatory of industrial managements, have lately been prepared and are in readiness to be issued as soon as the new Congress is organized. Minority members who have seen the prospective reports describe them as highly distorted, factually inaccurate, and prejudiced in their findings and recommendations. These minority members also say they have been informed that the proposed reports were prepared in the Research Division of CIO, and are based solely on CIO contentions.

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